



State of Alaska, Japan Office
Biweekly Seafood Narrative Report

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Alaskan Snow Crab (opilio)

The current yen to dollar rate will affect price negotiations for Alaskan Snow Crab opening its fishery on January 15.

Hearsay from a major buyer supplying snow crabs to the US domestic market has it that the price this season could be FOB Alaska \$3.50. If this is so, the packers will set their prices lower than this for Japanese market, say at \$3.25.

However, even if the FOB price is set at \$3.25, Japanese importer's selling price in Japan would be 1,000 yen with the currently weak yen. The Bairdi Snow Crab fishery will opening at Kodiak and South Peninsula after a long ban.

This year's GHL is set at 27,300,000 lbs. The last year's fishery was 28,500,000 lbs, a big cut of previous year's 196,000,000 lbs.

(Nikkan Seafoods News, dated January 9, 2001)

Chilean Salmon

Sales of Chilean salmon in the New Year were supposed to start out by looking at the prices of the new shipments for the season. In December the importers' price was 430 yen to 440 yen per kilo for 4-6 lbs and questioning whether it would drop to 400 yen or whether it would stop declining as the New Year proceeded. But now with the weakened yen it's a whole new ball game. No one knows yet how this will affect the importer's selling price in Japan.

(Nikkan Suisan Keizai Newspaper, dated January 9, 2001)

Household Expenses

According to a report on household expenses, seafood consumption has been falling in Japan every year. Salted and dried seafood have showed

drastic decreases in both volume and value. The Japanese are also eating less fish- meal, surimi and other seafoods. Although none of the seafoods showed an increase, the demand for fresh and live fish and shellfish have showed only a small decrease. The decline in the value of these seafoods, however, indicates the low price per commodity in the Japanese market place.

Research of Japanese households conducted by the Imperial Household Agency draws on data from 7,000 families nationwide. The distribution of household expenses can be said to indicate consumer trends. In 1999, the amount expended on seafood annually was 115,000 yen representing a 4.6% decrease from the previous year, and a 20% decrease from 1992. The value of fresh and live seafood, the only products holding their own, has decreased because of lower prices. As the consumption of beef has gone down drastically in both volume and value, it cannot be said that there has been a shift from seafood to beef.

Trends in Household Expenditures

Year	Consumption Expense (Yen)	Foodstuff (Yen)	Seafood (Yen)
1990	3,734,084	1,030,125	134,482
1991	3,925,358	1,076,325	139,992
1992	4,003,931	1,081,188	143,455
1993	4,022,955	1,068,760	137,343
1994	4,006,086	1,057,066	128,200
1995	3,948,742	1,024,518	126,332
1996	3,946,187	1,016,331	123,511
1997	3,999,195	1,033,373	123,841
1998	3,938,235	1,027,292	120,569
1999	3,876,091	1,005,973	115,032
(Jan.- Oct.)			
1998	3,215,633	827,173	93,330
1999	3,187,969	817,009	89,368
2000	3,116,733	788,293	85,334
(Jan.-Oct., 2000)			
Ratio to 1997 (%)	-5.1	-5.6	-10.8
Ratio to 1999 (%)	-2.2	-3.5	-4.5

(Nikkan Suisan Keizai Newspaper, dated January 9, 2001)